U.S. Embassy Asuncion, Paraguay Security Message for U.S. Citizens – Upcoming Demonstration 26 March 2015

The U.S. Embassy alerts U.S. citizens that the "Federación Nacional Campesina" has scheduled their yearly march in Asuncion for Thursday March 26, 2015. It has been reported that they plan to start congregating as early as Wednesday, March 25, 2015 in the vicinity of the Parque Seminario in Asuncion located on Kubitschek and 25 de Mayo. The themes for this year's march include rejection of Public Private Partnership (APP) law, rejection of narcopolitical influence, land reform, and rejection of soybean export development model.

At this time, the exact number of protesters that will arrive in Asuncion is unknown.

The intended route of the protestors is Avenida Kubitschek to Avenida Eusebio Ayala continuing to the city center. The protestors are expected to congregate in the plaza, in front of the congressional building downtown.

Please anticipate major congestion throughout the downtown area. U.S. citizens are strongly urged to avoid all large gatherings or any other event where crowds have congregated to demonstrate or protest. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and escalate into violence. You should avoid areas of demonstrations, and exercise caution if in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations. Review your personal security plans; remain aware of your surroundings, including local events; and monitor local news stations for updates. Maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to enhance your personal security and follow instructions of local authorities.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Paraguay enroll in the <u>State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)</u>. STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates and makes is easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Regularly monitor the State Department's <u>website</u>, where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read the <u>Country Specific Information for Paraguay</u>. For additional information, refer to <u>"A Safe Trip Abroad"</u> on the State Department's website.

Contact the U.S. embassy or consulate for up-to-date information on travel restrictions. You can also call <u>1-888-407-4747</u> toll-free from within the United States and Canada, or <u>1-202-501-4444</u> from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Follow us on <u>Twitter</u> and <u>Facebook</u>.

The U.S. Embassy in Asuncion is located at 1776 Mariscal Lopez Avenue.

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